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Netanyahu fires defense minister, sparking mass protests

(AP) — Tens of thousands of Israelis poured into the streets of cities across the country on Sunday night in a spontaneous outburst of anger after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu abruptly fired his defense minister for challenging the Israeli leader's judicial overhaul plan. Protesters in Tel Aviv blocked a main highway and lit large bonfires, while police scuffled with protesters who gathered outside Netanyahu's private home in Jerusalem. The unrest deepened a monthslong crisis over Netanyahu's plan to overhaul the judiciary, which has sparked mass protests, alarmed business leaders and former security chiefs and drawn concern from the United States and other close allies. Netanyahu's dismissal of Defense Minister Yoav Gallant signaled that the prime minister and his allies will barrel ahead this week with the overhaul plan. Gallant had been the first senior member of the ruling Likud party to speak out against it, saying the deep divisions were threatening to weaken the military.

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Israelis opposed to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's judicial overhaul plan set up bonfires and block a highway during a protest moments after the Israeli leader fired his defense minister, in Tel Aviv, Israel, Sunday, March 26, 2023. Defense Minister Yoav Gallant had called on Netanyahu to freeze the plan, citing deep divisions in the country and turmoil in the military. (AP Photo/Ohad Zwigenberg)

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Netanyahu fires defense minister, sparking mass protests

Continued from Front

In a brief statement, Netanyahu's office said late Sunday the prime minister had dismissed Gallant. Netanyahu later tweeted "we must all stand strong against refusal."

Tens of thousands of Israelis poured into the streets in protest after Netanyahu's announcement, blocking Tel Aviv's main artery, transforming the Ayalon highway into a sea of blue-and-white Israeli flags and lighting a large bonfire in the middle of the road.

Demonstrations took place in Beersheba, Haifa and Jerusalem, where thousands of people gathered outside Netanyahu's private residence. Police scuffled with protesters and



Israelis opposed to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's judicial overhaul plan block a highway during a protest moments after the Israeli leader fired his defense minister, in Tel Aviv, Israel, Sunday, March 26, 2023. Defense Minister Yoav Gallant had called on Netanyahu to freeze the plan, citing deep divisions in the country and turmoil in the military.

(AP Photo/Oren Ziv)

sprayed the crowd with a water cannon.

Inon Aizik, 27, said he came to demonstrate outside Netanyahu's private residence in central Jerusalem

because "bad things are happening in this country," referring to the judicial overhaul as "a quick legislative blitz."

Netanyahu's decision

came less than a day after Gallant, a former senior general, called for a pause in the controversial legislation until after next month's Independence Day holidays, citing the turmoil in the ranks of the military. Gallant had voiced concerns that the divisions in society were hurting morale in the military and emboldening Israel's enemies. "I see how the source of our strength is being eroded," Gallant said.

While several other Likud members had indicated they might follow Gallant, the party quickly closed ranks on Sunday, clearing the way for his dismissal.

Galit Distal Atbaryan, Netanyahu's public diplomacy minister, said that Netanyahu summoned Gallant to his office and told him "that he doesn't have any faith in him anymore and therefore he is fired."

Gallant tweeted shortly after the announcement that "the security of the state of Israel always was and will always remain my life mission."

Opposition leader Yair Lapid said that Gallant's dismissal "harms national security and ignores warnings of all defense officials."

Israel's consul general in New York City, Assaf Zamir, resigned in protest.

Avi Dichter, a former chief of the Shin Bet security agency, is expected to replace him. Dichter had reportedly flirted with joining Gallant but instead announced Sunday he was backing the prime minister. Netanyahu's government is pushing ahead for a parliamentary vote this week on a centerpiece of the overhaul — a law that would give the governing coalition the final say over all judicial appointments. It also seeks to pass laws that would grant parliament the authority to override Supreme Court decisions with a basic majority and limit judicial review of laws.

Netanyahu and his allies say the plan will restore a balance between the judicial and executive branches and rein in what they see as an interventionist court

with liberal sympathies.

But critics say the constellation of laws will remove the checks and balances in Israel's democratic system and concentrate power in the hands of the governing coalition. They also say that Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption charges, has a conflict of interest.

Tens of thousands of people have taken to the streets over the past three months to demonstrate against the plan in the largest demonstrations in the country's 75-year history.

Leaders of Israel's vibrant high-tech industry have said the changes will scare away investors, former top security officials have spoken out against the plan and key allies, including the United States and Germany, have voiced concerns.

In recent weeks discontent has even surged from within Israel's army — the most popular and respected institution among Israel's Jewish majority. A growing number of Israeli reservists, including fighter pilots, have threatened to withdraw from voluntary duty in the past weeks.

Israel's military is facing a surge in fighting in the occupied West Bank, threats from Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group and concerns that archenemy Iran is close to developing a nuclear-weapons capability. Violence both in Israel and the occupied West Bank has escalated over the past few weeks to heights unseen in years.

Manuel Trajtenberg, head of an influential Israeli think tank, the Institute for National Security Studies, said that "Netanyahu can dismiss his defense minister, he cannot dismiss the warnings he heard from Gallant."

Meanwhile, an Israeli good governance group on Sunday asked the country's Supreme Court to punish Netanyahu for allegedly violating a conflict of interest agreement meant to prevent him from dealing with the country's judiciary while he is on trial for corruption. □

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GOP states press voter photo ID rules, with unclear effects

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — As Ohio's primary approaches, a strict new photo ID requirement is stirring concerns for military veterans and out-of-state college students, in Amish communities and among older voters.

Other Republican-led states are moving in the same direction as they respond to conservative voters unsettled by unfounded claims of widespread fraud and persistent conspiracy theories over the accuracy of U.S. elections. Critics characterize such requirements as an overreaction that could end up disenfranchising eligible voters.

Ruth Kohake is among those caught up in the confusion over Ohio's law, which is going into effect this year. The retired nurse from Cincinnati gave up her driver's license and her car in 2019. Now 82, she thought she might never have to step foot in another state license agency.

But Ohio now requires an unexpired photo ID in order for someone to vote, and she'll have to get that at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. The law adds passports as valid ID, but eliminates nonphoto documentation such as a bank statement, government check or utility bill for registration and in-person voting. Military IDs also are no longer acceptable when registering to vote.

"I'm very, very, very concerned that people are not going to know. They're going to come to vote and they're not going to be able to, or they're going to have to vote provisional," she said. "It's just a very upsetting time. Us old people, we have other things to worry about."

Of 35 states that request or require a photo ID to vote, Ohio is now the ninth Republican-controlled state to move to a strict law allowing few to no alternatives, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Fifteen states allow other ways voters can verify their identity, such as an electric bill, bank statement or signature match.



Ruth Kohake poses for a portrait outside of the Price Hill Public Library, Thursday, March 23, 2023, in Cincinnati. Kohake is among those caught up in the confusion over Ohio's strict new photo ID requirement. The retired nurse from Cincinnati gave up her driver's license and her car in 2019. Now 82, she thought she might never have to step foot in another state license agency.

(AP Photo/Jeff Dean)

The number of states where voters face strict photo ID requirements is poised to rise in the coming months. Nebraska lawmakers are in the process of establishing a new photo ID program after voters approved a requirement in November. In North Carolina, a photo ID requirement declared unconstitutional just three months ago could be revived by the state Supreme Court that has a new Republican majority. Meanwhile, a new Idaho law, which prohibits students from using college IDs at the polls, drew a recent legal challenge.

Wendy Weiser, vice president for democracy at the Brennan Center for Justice, said the new Ohio law undercuts the Republican narrative about the state having a record of clean and well-run elections.

"Ohio election officials have long been adamant that this wasn't needed, that Ohio had a good system for vetting and rooting out any fraud and the proof was in the pudding," she said.

Republican state Sen. Theresa Gavarone, a supporter of the law, said the change will make it harder to cheat.

It already has led to frustration and confusion, in part because of the fast-

approaching state primary on May 2.

Republican Secretary of State Frank LaRose ordered counties to begin implementing the fast-tracked law so it would be in effect for the primary, though its start date falls within the early voting period. Waiting until fall, LaRose said, "would result in a clear violation of Ohio law."

That decision is not without complications. The free state photo IDs the law provides won't be available until April 7, the law's effective date, despite military and overseas voting already having begun and early, in-person voting set to start April 4.

At the same time, a legal challenge to the law by a Democratic law firm remains unresolved. The lawsuit alleges the law creates "needless discriminatory burdens," including by requiring photo IDs, making it harder to correct minor mistakes on ballots and restricting mail balloting.

Veterans' organizations and county recorders, particularly in the populous, Democratic-leaning counties that include Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati, have been vocal about the law excluding county-issued veteran photo IDs, though it does allow military IDs, to vote. They cost

less and are valid longer — 10 years — than a driver's license.

"People find reasons to fix something that doesn't need to be fixed," said Larry Anderson, 85, a veteran from Columbus who has found the veteran ID card a convenience.

"Veterans could come back from the wars and not have a driver's license and not drive a car, and it just creates more problems for them."

AMVETS Executive Director Don McCauley said the issue has been brought to lawmakers' attention and he hopes to see it resolved before the next election.

Access issues also have arisen among the roughly 37,000 Amish in Ohio's Holmes County, where the largely conservative voters reject being photographed and often lack other forms of government ID.

Lawmakers allowed for religious exceptions through an affidavit that the law's supporters say will be easy to use, but Holmes County Elections Director Lisa Welch is worried that confusion and extra paperwork could add to the workloads of already stressed boards of elections.

"My biggest concern is the first time through, we get a whole bunch of provisionals (that must be processed

separately later)," she said. "I'm the only full-time person in the office right now, and we can't do everything."

Holmes County Commissioner Joe Miller fears the new process could deter some voters.

"I want honest voting, I understand that, but a lot of the Amish don't have the photo ID and won't do a photo ID," he said. "So what the Amish do usually — they're pacifists, they don't fight anybody — they just walk away."

Ohio State University has advised its roughly 16,000 out-of-state students against voting in person on Election Day — for fear that obtaining the necessary state ID card could invalidate their driver's license in their home state and disrupt their financial aid and residency status. The schools suggests such students casting Ohio ballots do so by mail.

Backers of the photo ID requirements have widely moved away from the argument that such laws prevent voter fraud, which happens only rarely. The conservative Heritage Foundation's database lists only 26 convictions for voter impersonation fraud — the type deterred by photo ID requirements — anywhere in the U.S. between 2004 and 2022. In presidential elections alone, Americans cast more than 645 million votes during that period.

Jason Snead, executive director of the conservative group Honest Elections Project Action, told reporters in a recent policy briefing that robust voter turnout and Democrats' unexpectedly strong performance in the 2022 midterm elections disprove the idea that election security enhancements suppress voters.

"I would submit that, actually when you look at the sort of election integrity laws that are advancing through state legislatures and actually getting passed, what is happening in conservative states is far more mainstream than what we're seeing happen in liberal states," Snead said. □

4th person found dead in chocolate factory blast; 3 missing

(AP) — A fourth person was confirmed dead and three people remained unaccounted for Sunday, two days after a powerful explosion at a chocolate factory shook a small town in Pennsylvania.

West Reading Borough Chief of Police Wayne Holben confirmed the body of a fourth victim was found under debris early Sunday at the R.M. Palmer Co. plant in the borough of West Reading, about 60 miles (96 kilometers) northwest of Philadelphia.

Holben asked for continued prayers from the community and vowed that rescuers and officials “will not rest until every single person affected by this tragedy has been accounted for” from the blast that occurred just before 5 p.m. Friday.

Rescue crews have been using heat imaging equipment and dogs to search for possible survivors after the blast destroyed one building and damaged a neighboring building. Crews were now using heavy equipment to methodically and carefully pull debris from the site, Holben said.

Borough Fire Chief Chad Moyer said Saturday night



Emergency responders and heavy equipment are seen at the site of a deadly explosion at a chocolate factory in West Reading, Pennsylvania, Saturday, March 25.

(AP Photo/Michael Rubinkam)

that the chance of finding survivors was “decreasing rapidly” due to the explosion’s force and the amount of time that had passed. Mayor Samantha Kaag said officials were “still hopeful to at least get some answers and get some recoveries so that people have that reassurance and that closure.”

“We’re just trying to hold out as much hope as we can to get the right answers, to get quality answers, to get information to those that are affected and then let it go over to the investigation,” Kaag said.

Officials said they had no update on the condition of a woman pulled alive from the rubble early Saturday.

Kaag said she had apparently been on the second floor and was found in a “hopeful circumstance,” calling out to rescuers despite her injuries after a dog located her.

Officials also reported no updates on the conditions of those taken to hospitals. Reading Hospital said it received 10 patients and

transferred two to other facilities, while two others were admitted in good and fair condition respectively and the others had been discharged.

R.M. Palmer said in a statement Saturday afternoon that everyone at the company was “devastated” and it was reaching out to employees and their families through first responders and disaster recovery organizations because its communication systems were down.

Kaag, a volunteer firefighter herself, said rescue crews had been working 12- to 16-hour shifts and were so dedicated to continuing the search that “you have to pull them away at this point” to swap out and get some rest. Gov. Josh Shapiro visited the site Saturday and vowed support from the state.

Kaag said some residents have reported damage to windows from the blast, and she asked people to “take a walk around your house” and report any damage.

State and local fire investigators are continuing to examine the scene to try to determine the cause of the blast. □



FILE - Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear addresses reporters during a press conference in Frankfort, Ky., Nov. 15, 2022. Beshear’s veto of a bill aimed at transgender health care has put Kentucky in the middle of a national fight. But the consequences are more immediate in Kentucky. Its election this year offers an early test on the state-by-state assault on gender-affirming care for minors. The veto issued Friday set off competing messages likely to be repeated until the November election.

(AP Photo/Timothy D. Easley, File)

(AP) — Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear’s veto of a bill aimed at transgender health care puts the state in the middle of a national fight, but with more immediate consequences as the state’s looming election offers an early test on the state-by-state assault on gender-affirming care for minors.

diate consequences as the state’s looming election offers an early test on the state-by-state assault on gender-affirming care for minors.

Veto puts Kentucky in thick of fight over transgender rights

The veto issued Friday set off competing messages likely to be repeated until the November election — when Bluegrass State voters will decide whether to reward the Democratic governor with a second term or hand over the governor’s office to a Republican. No one seems to know yet how much weight voters will put on the transgender issue more than seven months away.

The legislation in Kentucky is part of a widespread movement, with Republican state lawmakers in other states approving extensive measures that restrict the rights of LGBTQ+ people this year, from bills targeting trans athletes

and drag performers to measures limiting gender-affirming care.

Beshear framed the Republican-backed bill in Kentucky as an example of government overreach into parental rights. The sweeping bill would ban gender-affirming care for minors — one of many provisions that would affect the lives of young transgender people.

“At the end of the day, this is about my belief — and, I think, the belief of the majority of Kentuckians — that parents should get to make important medical decisions about their children, not big government,” Beshear told reporters soon after his veto.

Kentucky’s GOP-dominant

ed legislature passed the bill by lopsided margins. Lawmakers will reconvene Wednesday for the final two days of this year’s session, when they could vote to override the veto.

Republicans took immediate aim at the governor’s veto, saying he veered too far for most Kentuckians. Republican Party of Kentucky spokesperson Sean Southard asked: “Is Andy Beshear the governor of Kentucky or California?” He predicted the governor will pay a political price for his action.

“Once this campaign is over, today may very well be remembered as the day Andy Beshear lost his bid for reelection,” Southard said Friday. □

Venezuela: 21 officials, businessmen arrested in oil scheme

(AP) — Venezuela's attorney general said Saturday that 21 people, including senior officials in the government of President Nicolás Maduro and business leaders, have been arrested in connection with a corruption scheme involving international oil sales. Prosecutor Tarek William Saab said the alleged scheme involved selling Venezuelan oil through the country's cryptocurrency oversight agency in parallel to the state-run Petróleos de Venezuela SA.

The oversight agency allegedly signed contracts for the loading of crude on ships "without any type of administrative control or guarantees," violating legal regulations, Saab said, without mentioning the amounts involved. Once the oil was marketed, "the corresponding payments were not made" to the state oil company.

The attorney general's statement comes five days after Venezuela's once-



Venezuelan Attorney General Tarek William Saab speaks during a news conference about corruption cases with the state run oil company, PDVSA, in Caracas, Venezuela, Saturday, March 25, 2023. Saab said Saturday that 21 people, including senior officials in the government of President Nicolás Maduro and business leaders, have been arrested in connection with a corruption scheme involving international oil sales.

(AP Photo/Matias Delacroix)

powerful oil minister, Tarek El Aissami, resigned amid allegations of corruption against some of his closest associates.

El Aissami said he resigned to "accompany and fully support" the investigations. For now, El Aissami, who was one of Maduro's trusted ministers, is not facing

charges. The U.S. government designated El Aissami a narcotics kingpin in 2017 in connection with activities in his previous positions as interior minister and governor. El Aissami's resignation was announced two days after the Public Ministry appointed five prosecutors to probe the alleged

crimes investigated by the National Anti-Corruption Police. Among the 10 officials arrested, according to the attorney general, are Col. Antonio Pérez Suárez, the vice president of trade and quality supply at PDVSA; Hugbel Roa, the former minister of food; and Joselit Ramírez, the national superintendent of cryptocurrencies. Also arrested were 11 businessmen, who will be charged with appropriation or diversion of public assets, influence peddling, money laundering and criminal association, Saab said, adding that the crime of treason against the country will be added to public officials' charges. Corruption has long been rampant in Venezuela, which sits atop the world's largest petroleum reserves. But officials are rarely held accountable — a major irritant to citizens, the majority of whom live on \$1.90 a day, the international benchmark of extreme poverty. □

Mexico sanctioned for not protecting endangered porpoise



FILE - This undated file photo provided by The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shows a vaquita porpoise. Mexico announced in the first week of March 2023, that it is seeking to avoid potential trade sanctions for failing to stop the near-extinction of the vaquita, the world's smallest porpoise and most endangered marine mammal. Studies estimate there may be as few as eight vaquitas remaining in the Gulf of California, the only place they exist and where they often become entangled in illegal gill nets and drown.

(Paula Olson/NOAA via AP File)

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico acknowledged Saturday it faces sanctions from the international wildlife body known as CITES for not doing enough to protect the vaquita marina, a small porpoise that is the world's most endangered marine mammal.

The sanctions have not yet been announced, but they could make it difficult for Mexico to export some

regulated animal and plant products like crocodile or snake skins, orchids and cactuses. Commercial seafood species like shrimp would not be affected, but the ruling sets a precedent and some groups are pushing for seafood import bans.

"While no one relishes economically painful sanctions, all other efforts to prompt Mexico to save the

vaquita have failed," said Sarah Uhlemann, international program director at the Center for Biological Diversity.

"We hope these strong measures wake up the Mexican government."

Mexico's Foreign Relations Department said in a statement that CITES had ruled that Mexico's protection plan for the vaquita was insufficient.

Studies estimate there may be as few as eight vaquitas remaining in the Gulf of California, the only place they exist and where they often become entangled in illegal gill nets and drown. The Foreign Relations Department said CITES had ruled the protection plan "inadequate" and said the full ruling — and possible sanctions — "will be officially announced next week." The Department called the ruling an "unequal treatment of our country, because it did not take into account the many and exhaustive actions that have

been taken."

Mexico recently submitted a revised protection plan to CITES, after the body rejected an earlier version.

Mexico's plan lists establishing "alternative fishing techniques" to gillnet fishing as one of its top priorities. But in reality, the government's protection efforts have been uneven, at best, and face often violent opposition from local fishermen.

The administration of President Andrés Manuel López has largely refused to spend money to compensate fishermen for staying out of the vaquita refuge and to stop using gill nets. The nets are set illegally to catch totoaba, a fish whose swim bladders are a delicacy in China worth thousands of dollars per pound.

The government has also sunk concrete blocks with hooks to snare illegal nets in the last bit of the Gulf — also known as the Sea of Cortes — where the vaquitas have been seen. □

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Pray for rain: Spanish farmers hold unique Mass amid drought

(AP) — When Josep Altarriba looks across his parched fields, the Spanish farmer can't remember a time of such widespread drought in Catalonia. If it doesn't rain in the next two weeks, he says there's little chance of saving the harvest.

What can be done? For the mountain villagers of L'Espunyola, the answer is divine intervention.

On Sunday, around 250 residents brought back the faded practice of a special Mass and procession to pray to Our Lady of the Torrents, a local virgin associated with rainfall.

Under mostly sunny skies, worshippers lifted the colorfully painted statue of the Lady of the Torrents from its place of prominence in the stone church.

She was then nestled onto a wooden litter filled with green branches and hoisted aloft, to be carried around the village followed by the bishop and parishioners.

"It's not a magic act, it is an act of trust," Bishop Fran-



Local residents take part in a procession carrying a replica of the Our Lady of the Torrents, a virgin historically associated with drought, in L'Espunyola, north of Barcelona, Spain, Sunday, March 26, 2023. Farmers and parishioners gathered Sunday at the small hermitage of L'Espunyola, a rural village in Catalonia, to attend a mass asking the local virgin Our Lady of the Torrents for rain. Prayers and hymns were offered to ask for divine intervention in solving the earthly crisis.

(AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti)

cesc Conesa told The Associated Press.

Three years of very low rainfall and high temperatures put Spain officially into long-term drought, the country's weather agency

said this month. Last year was Spain's sixth driest — and the hottest since records began in 1961.

Catalonia, in the country's northeastern corner, is among the worst-affected

regions. Agrotourism and farming are the primary sources of income for the 260 inhabitants of L'Espunyola, an hour and a half north of Barcelona.

"If it doesn't rain within two

weeks, it's very hard to say what might happen," Altarriba, the farmer, said after celebrating Mass.

Local councilor and firefighter Eduard Perarnau described the special Mass as a last resort. The government has restricted water usage, asking farmers to limit watering crops and trees as much as possible.

All three reservoirs in the area are below a third of their capacity. The nearby La Baells reservoir is down to 25%, and in some places only a trickle of water cuts through the layers of silt that used to be underwater.

The last time the village offered prayers and hymns to Our Lady of the Torrents was in 2008, local media reported. And it worked — residents say the rains came not long after.

But this year, the bishop doesn't guarantee success. "We have asked with faith, and many people have come and prayed with faith," Conesa said. "The Lord will give us what suits us." □



Protesters wearing number tags during a rally in Hong Kong, Sunday, March 26, 2023. Dozens of people on Sunday joined Hong Kong's first authorized demonstration against the government since the lifting of major COVID-19 restrictions under unprecedentedly strict rules, including wearing a numbered badge around their necks.

(AP Photo/Louise Delmotte)

HONG KONG (AP) — Dozens of people on Sunday joined Hong Kong's first authorized protest since the lifting of major COVID-19 restrictions under unprecedentedly strict rules, including wearing a numbered badge around their necks. The rules set out by the police, who cited security rea-

sons, came as the financial hub was promoting its return to normalcy after years of anti-virus controls and political turmoil.

During the pandemic, protests were rare due to COVID-19 restrictions. In addition, many activists have been silenced or jailed after Beijing imposed a na-

Hong Kongers hold first protest in years under strict rules

tional security law following massive protests in 2019. Critics say the city's freedom of assembly that was promised Hong Kong when it returned to China from Britain in 1997 has been eroded.

Sunday's demonstration against the proposed reclamation and construction of rubbish-processing facilities was the first police-approved march of its kind after the city scrapped its mask mandate and social distancing limits.

But organizers had to comply with police requirements such as taking measures to ensure the number of participants would not exceed the expected turnout of 100 people and asking for proof of a "reasonable excuse" from protesters who wore masks during the event. At the height of the 2019 anti-government movement, Hong Kong's

government invoked emergency powers to ban masks from public gatherings so it can identify protesters who officials accused of illegal acts.

On Sunday, about 80 people expressed their opposition to the plans in Tseung Kwan O, a residential and industrial area, the organizer said. They had to walk in a cordoned-off moving line in the rain amid heavy police presence.

Theresa Wang described the new restrictions as "a bit weird" but said they were still acceptable because the city was adjusting to "the new Hong Kong."

"I'm not happy but we have to accept it. We have to accept what is deemed legal now," the 70-year-old retiree said, adding that she hoped the protest would be a sign the government is more open to discussion. Protester Jack Wong said

he would prefer not to wear the badge printed with a number. Police said earlier the requirement aims to prevent lawbreakers from joining the march.

"But if it is a requirement, what can I say? I prefer not to comment further. You know what I mean," he said.

In granting its approval, police also requested that organizers ensure there would not be any acts that might endanger national security, including displaying anything seditious.

Cyrus Chan, one of the march organizers, said demonstrators had communicated with police on their promotional materials and slogans. Officers earlier had told him that participants should not wear all-black outfits, he said. Protesters commonly wore black during the 2019 protests. □



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Analysis on the work by Aruban customs has scored very high at UNCTAD

(Oranjestad)—Recently, the minister of Finance, Mrs. Xiomara Maduro, has been given a presentation of the analysis conducted by Mr. Terence Leonard, customs expert at the UNCTAD, for the Department of Customs (Aduana) of Aruba. The results of the analysis show that the work done by the Aruban customs has scored very high at UNCTAS, which is a unit within the United Nations that help developing countries in facilitating trade, for example.



much profit the Department of Customs generates for Aruba, and the other to evaluate the pilot program "Trade Facilitation" that is currently being applied by the Aruban customs.

In terms of the profits generated by customs from 2014 to 2022, figures have shown that the department's efficiency has generated more profit for the island. Results from the analysis on



The Aruban customs has been working with the Asycuda system for quite some time already, and Mr. Leonard has come to help the department with the implementation and the transfer of knowledge in relation to this system. Besides this, Mr. Leonard has conducted 2 analyses: One to have an insight on how



the Trade Facilitation program have also proven to be superb, seeing as the work system based on risks have also proven to be very efficient. In turn, this has allowed businesses to receive their shipments sooner without affecting the country's profits. Mr. Leonard indicated that UNCTAD is impressed by these results, and would like to use Aruba as an example of "best practice" to

help other island countries in the region.

Minister Maduro thanks Mr. Leonard for the cooperation and collaboration with the UNCTAD, and she congratulates the Department of Customs for their impressive results. It seems that the investments made in the Asycuda system and the work system based on risks have provided major benefits. □

Deaci warns consumers to not buy products that are not in their original packaging

(Oranjestad)— This past Thursday, The Department of Economic Relations (Deaci) has made a public service announcement on their official Facebook page, in which they warn shoppers to be more conscious about where they buy their groceries and what exactly they are buying, especially when it comes to packaged goods.

"The Department of Economic Relations has discovered that there are a few supermarkets on the

island—especially those in the San Nicolas area—that are selling rice in small and unmarked packages. This is also true for several other types of packaged foods as well. We ask all shoppers to not buy products that are unmarked and that have no nutrient information on them," the deaci remarked in their post. They have indicated that these types of products are risky, and can bring problems along with them. A shopper may be buying a package weighing 1 kilo, but in reality, they are

actually getting less product. Additionally, one may never know if the process of changing packaging is done safely and hygienic.

The department has informed that their investigators will be extra attentive to this type of practice among sellers, and have called on all shoppers to please keep an eye out for these types of products.

Comments from users under the Facebook post have stated that this phenomenon has been ongoing



for quite some time. What's more is that this is not only happening in supermarkets, but in pharmacies as well.

The comments have further pointed out that this practice happens with all types of products, includ-

ing rice, flour, cornflakes, baking powder, dog food, candy and more. It must be emphasized again that this can be dangerous for the buyer, seeing as they have no clue if this product is past its due date or not. There is also no telling what is in these products. □



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Another Treasure of Aruba's Beaches: Sea Glass!

NOORD - Especially on the strip on white sand between the famous Natural Bridge" and the huge red anchor close to "Grapefield" beach you will be able to find your own pieces of sea glass. The sea glass that was created is the product of a very long and interesting process. It

can take anywhere from 10 to 30 years to make sea glass. The name for any piece of glass that finds its way to the ocean and tumbles around in the water long enough is "Sea glass.

The colorful pieces of glass are being used for decoration, handcrafts and jew-

elry!

If you like to see the sea glass for yourself, and be in awe of the power of nature, rent a car or jeep and go explore our deserted beaches on the north side of the island. Make it a fun family day!



Everybody knows that you are not allowed to take local shells home, but the

people working at the airport have no problem you taking sea glass home. ☐



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Camping season 2023 announced

ORANJESTAD - In connection with the upcoming camping season during spring break, the Chief of Police, Mr. Ramon Arnhem, urges all campers to be aware of the conditions set for the camping permit.

Camping starts on Sunday, April 2, 2023, from noon, and the last day is April 16, 2023. It is only permitted to set up tents and trailers on the beach during these days. The Police will remove any tents or trailers placed on the beach before the starting day and time, at the owner's expense.

After April 16, 2023, campers must remove all camping-related objects should be removed from the beach. Failing to remove these will also result in their removal at the permit holder's expense. The police urge everyone to keep all beaches clean. Dispose of all trash in trash containers or trash bags.

Deadline for a camping permit

The last day to apply for a camping permit is March 15, 2023, at 4:30 pm. You can submit permit applications during weekdays from 8:00 am to 11:30 am and from 1:00 pm to 04:30 pm.

Additional conditions are now applicable:

BBQ on the beach (sand) is not allowed under any circumstance. BBQ is only allowed in designated areas and when using a gas BBQ Pit. Charcoal is not permitted at all.

Tents and trailers used for camping should be in good condition and placed at least 10 meters from the water's edge and 5 meters from the road's side. Not complying with these guides will also result in the

removal of these tents or trailers by the Police.

Camping sites can under no circumstance be reserved.

You are allowed to only place a tent, trailer, and objects in the location designated by Government officials.

Tents/trailers should have proper first aid resources (First Aid kit)

Obscene objects or posters are prohibited.

Campers should always comply with all the conditions set in the camping permit.

Motor vehicles, bicycles, horses, or any cart is prohibited on the beach.

Campfires are prohibited on the beach

The sale of food, refreshments, cocktails, or any other item on the beach without the proper permit is prohibited.

You can only play music in a tent or trailer during the weekdays until 10:00 pm and on the weekend until midnight as long as it does not cause nuisances to neighbor campers.

It is not allowed to trim or chop any tree without a permit.

Boating or setting anchors in designated swimming zones is not allowed. It is prohibited to tie boats to buoys meant for ships.

It is not allowed to use pallets and cardboard on the beach. Failing to comply with this rule will result in the removal by the authorities. The beach or palm trees are not allowed to be used as a toilet.

Horses and dogs are not allowed on the beach.

Beach huts are not allowed to be used for camping and should remain available for beachgoers.

All beaches should be kept clean. Glass bottles and or glass shrapnels must be re-

moved immediately from the sand and not discarded in the ocean. It also applies to all trash.

You cannot transfer the camping permit to a third party.

The permit holder should have the permit visible to the police in the tent/trailer.

The permit holder's right to use the camping site is exclusive during the camping period. Before the camping date, no area can be reserved/marked or cordoned off, etc.

The permit holder is solely responsible for any harm caused to others by his/her trailer/tent or any other object.

The permit holder must strictly follow police directives in the interest of public



order, the safety of people, morality, and property.

Failing to comply with any of these conditions is considered similar to camping without a permit. The camping permit will be immediately revoked and may result in a fine.

ing permit application is March 15, 2023, at 4:30 pm.

Comply with all the rules and regulations and have great camping. Be aware that the police will be actively checking all beaches and camping sites during the camping season. □

The deadline for the camp-

Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to **Mabel and Theodoros from New York, USA**. Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!

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Fruit Loose



Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mango's hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sand-paper like texture when

immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

Kenepa

Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and

have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif

There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimaruku

Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimaruku. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarukus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true



vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind

A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses

and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March. □



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Imelda Geerman-Willems: 18 years of bringing joy to children

(Oranjestad)—For 18 long years now, Imelda Geerman-Willems have brought joy to the children of Aruba with her puppets, and in recent years, with her magnificent puppet shows. In an interview with our reporter, Imelda shares her journey that has led her into the world of child entertainment and puppetry.

Imelda has been a government worker for 30 years. She told our reporter that she comes from a family of 8 children; 5 girls, 3 boys. She is the youngest of the bunch. She's been married to Patrick Geerman for 22 years and they have one teenage son who is now 19 years old.

Imelda worked at Party Animals for 8 and a half years, but after her mother passed away, she decided to stop working at children's parties. "My mother's passing left a hole in my heart. Not long after that, I lost my father as well. It was a really rough time," she expressed.

A couple months after quitting Party Animals, she started to miss the joy of making children happy. After talking to her husband about how she felt, he started to prepare a surprise for her.

"When I saw materials start to come in the house, he surprised me with a number from the Chamber of Commerce with the name 'EZ party solutions' on it. It's been 18 years since that surprise, and it was one of the best things that has happened to me. I was able to go back to making children happy," she shared.



The first show from EZ Party Solutions included Tio George and Tanchi Esmee (Uncle George and Aunt Esmee). Imelda explained that at that time, she had never visited Disney Land, but was really hoping to go one day. This gave her the idea to give children that may not have the luxury to go to Disney Land, to enjoy the same type of characters that you see there.

The first costume that Imelda got was a Hello Kitty costume for a friend's party. After that, they met with a group preparing their set for the Carnival Queen show, with their theme being Sesame Street. Imelda and her husband immediately offered to provide costumes for the show—which ultimately won for best show that year.

After working on two shows with Tio George and Tanchi Esmee, Imelda shared that she did something beyond her comfort zone: she produced her own show named "Masha and the Bear." This show sold out 6 times over before it even premiered.

This year, she organized the show called "Encanto and Friends." She explained that after she saw the movie Encanto, she was inspired to make this show, along with the beloved character Sonic. After 4 full houses, EZ Party Solutions, along with

dance group Kids & Youth in Action, received an invitation to perform in Curacao.

"This was my dream come true, thanks to the EZ crew, my family—and last but not least, my promoter, Corine. We were able to represent Aruba and have left a beautiful mark. In Curacao, we were able to sell out the show and perform for 1500 people in the audience. From the moment the first song played, you could hear the children's excitement. It really warmed our hearts and made us less nervous. It was a beautiful experience. It does take a lot of work, but it's always worth it for the kids. A big thanks goes to Miss Debra for joining the show," she expressed.

For what's in store this year, Imelda assures that there is a great show coming soon, but that she couldn't give away too much yet.

Lastly, Imelda extends her gratitude to everyone that has helped her dreams of bringing joy to children come true. "Once again, I want to thank God for giving me the energy and the motivation to do what I do, to my family for their support and patience, and to my crew who has always gone all out to make things happen." □

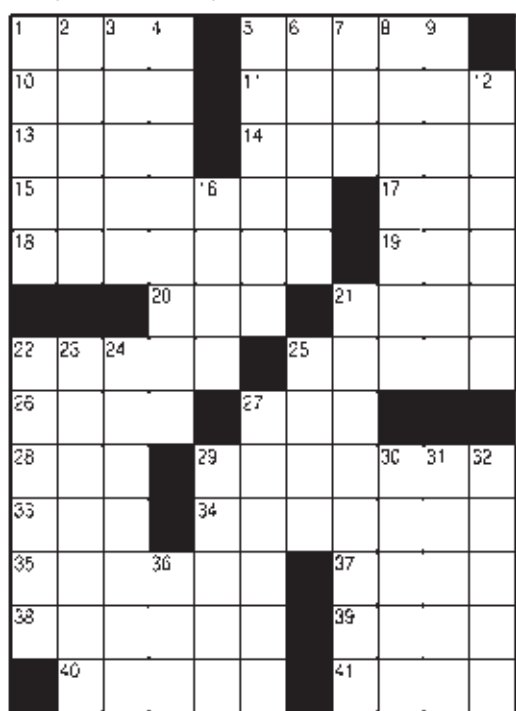


CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-27

CRYPTOQUOTE

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UJ ETLHW UB VTF OMEF UO
VTF FMJVT CTU WUFQB'V
FBYUI M VMQVI AFSFJMXF.

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Saturday's Cryptoquote: NO PROBLEM IS SO FORMIDABLE THAT YOU CAN'T WALK AWAY FROM IT. CHARLES M. SCHULZ



Saturday's answer

Gap grows between TikTok users, lawmakers on potential ban

(AP) — On the one side are dozens of lawmakers on Capitol Hill issuing dire warnings about security breaches and possible Chinese surveillance. On the other are some 150 million TikTok users in the U.S. who just want to be able to keep making and watching short, fun videos offering makeup tutorials and cooking lessons, among other things.

The disconnect illustrates the uphill battle that lawmakers from both sides of the aisle face in trying to convince the public that China could use TikTok as a weapon against the American people. But many users on the platform are more concerned about the possibility of the government taking away their favorite app. TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew said during a nearly six-hour congressional hearing Thursday that the platform has never turned over user data to the Chinese government, and wouldn't do so if asked. Nevertheless, lawmakers, the FBI and officials at other agencies continue to raise alarms that Chinese law compels Chinese companies like TikTok's parent company ByteDance to fork over data to the government for whatever purposes it deems to involve national security. There's also concern Beijing might try to push pro-China narratives or misinformation through the platform.

"I want to say this to all the teenagers out there, and TikTok influencers who think we're just old and out of touch and don't know what we're talking about, trying to take your favorite app," said Republican Rep. Dan Crenshaw during the



Supporters of TikTok hold signs during a rally to defend the app, Wednesday, March 22, 2023, at the Capitol in Washington. The House holds a hearing Thursday, with TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew about the platform's consumer privacy and data security practices and impact on kids.

(AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

hearing. "You may not care that your data is being accessed now, but you will be one day."

Many TikTok users reacted to the hearing by posting videos critical of lawmakers who grilled Chew and frequently cut him off from speaking. Some called a potential TikTok ban, as some lawmakers and the Biden administration has reportedly threatened, the "biggest scam" of the year. And others blamed the surge of scrutiny on the platform on another tech rival, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg.

But few expressed fear of possible Chinese surveillance or security breaches that lawmakers continue to amplify as they look to rein in TikTok.

Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., whose district is in the heart of Silicon Valley, said he is mindful of the value that platforms like TikTok provide to young people as an outlet for creative expression and building community. "But there's absolutely no reason that an American technology company

can't do that," said Khanna, the top Democrat on the cyber subcommittee on House Armed Service. "America has the most innovative technology companies in the world." He added that Congress should move forward with a proposal that would force platform's sale to an American company for continued access for its millions of users while "ensuring that the platform isn't subject to Chinese propaganda or compromises people's privacy."

TikTok itself has been trying to leverage its popularity. On Wednesday, it sent dozens of influencers to Congress to lobby against a ban. It has also ramped up a broader public relations campaign, plastering ads all over Washington that tout its promises of securing users' data and privacy and creating a safe platform for its young users. Some popular TikTokers who speak out against a ban are concerned — and angered — about how it might impact their personal lives. Many earn income from their videos and have inked brand partnerships to market products to their audiences — another stream of revenue that could be wiped away if the platform disappears. They would also lose the social capital that comes from having a large following on the trend-setting app. □

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Technical issues at Lufthansa cause delays in Frankfurt



FILE - Lufthansa aircrafts are parked at the airport in Frankfurt, Germany, Friday, Sept.2, 2022. German news agency dpa says Lufthansa's operations have been disrupted at Frankfurt airport because of technical problems, the dpa news agency reported Sunday, March 26, 2023.

(AP Photo/Michael Probst, File)

BERLIN (AP) — Lufthansa's operations were disrupted Sunday at Frankfurt airport because of technical problems, German news agency dpa reported. Check-in systems on the airline's website and at the counter, as well as boarding, were affected at Germany's biggest airport, a Lufthansa spokeswoman told dpa. Some flights were delayed or would have to be canceled because of the problems. Check-in was still possible using cellphone browsers on smartphones or tablets, and the Lufthansa app.

The technical problems were caused by external IT service providers, dpa reported. Lufthansa asked travelers to check the status of their flights and said it was working with "high-pressure" to resolve the issues. Last month, cable damage during construction work in Frankfurt caused Lufthansa computer systems to fail, resulting in flight cancellations and delays worldwide. Sunday's problems came a day before a national strike in Germany is set to bring the country's traffic to a

standstill with airport, train and public transportation employees all protesting for higher salaries in a one-day walkout on Monday.

Air traffic was already canceled on Sunday at Germany's second-biggest airport in Munich because of the upcoming strike. □

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Adele extends Las Vegas residency, plans concert film



FILE - Adele appears at the Brit Awards 2022 in London on Feb. 8, 2022. Adele has announced that she's extending her Las Vegas residency with 34 more dates between June and November and also plans to release a concert film. Saturday night's show was the last performance in the British singer's original "Weekends With Adele" series that covered 34 dates since last November on the Las Vegas Strip.

(Photo by Joel C Ryan/Invision/AP, File)

Army pulls recruiting ads after Jonathan Majors' arrest

WASHINGTON (AP) — The arrest of actor Jonathan Majors has upended the Army's newly launched advertising campaign that was aimed at reviving the service's struggling recruiting numbers.

Majors, who authorities said was arrested Saturday in New York on charges of strangulation, assault and harassment, was the narrator of two ads at the heart of a broader media campaign that kicked off at the start of the NCAA's March Madness college basketball tournament.

Army leaders were hopeful that the popularity of the star of the recently released "Creed III" and "Ant-Man and The Wasp: Quantumania," would help them reach the youth audience. In a statement Sunday, the Army's Enterprise Marketing Office said that the Army was aware of Majors' arrest and was "deeply concerned by the allegations." It added that while Majors "is innocent until proven guilty, prudence dictates



FILE - Jonathan Majors arrives at the premiere of "Creed III" on Feb. 27, 2023, at TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles. The arrest of actor Majors on Saturday, March 25, 2023, has upended the Army's newly launched advertising campaign that was aimed at reviving the service's struggling recruiting numbers.

(Photo by Jordan Strauss/Invision/AP, File)

that we pull our ads until the investigation into these allegations is complete."

New York City police said the actor was involved in a domestic dispute with a 30-year-old woman. "The victim informed police she was assaulted," a police spokesperson said in a statement. A lawyer for Majors, Priya Chaudhry, said in a statement Sunday there was evidence clear-

ing Majors and that the actor "is provably the victim of an altercation with a woman he knows."

The Army ads, titled "Overcoming Obstacles" and "Pushing Tomorrow," are part of the plan to revive the Army's "Be All You Can Be" motto. They highlighted the history of the Army and some of the many professions that recruits can pursue. □

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Adele announced Sunday that she's extending her Las Vegas residency with 34 more dates between June and November and also plans to release a concert film.

Saturday night's show was the last performance in the British singer's original "Weekends With Adele" series that covered 34 dates since last November on the Las Vegas Strip.

Her representatives said Adele's shows will resume at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace on June 16 and run through Nov. 4.

The June performances will be recorded and released as a concert special.

Adele ended speculation about her future at the Colosseum, telling a sold-out crowd Saturday night that she will be back in June and mentioning the concert film, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported.

"Playing to 4,000 people for 34 dates is not enough, and I know that," Adele said. "So I am coming back for a few weeks in June, and I'm going to release it to make sure anyone who wants to see this show can see it." □

Mexican kid's comic Xavier López, 'Chabelo,' dies at 88

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Xavier López, a Mexican children's comic better known by his stage name "Chabelo," has died at 88, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador wrote Saturday.

López's best-known work, the Sunday variety show "En Familia con Chabelo", ran for an astonishing 48 years from 1967 to 2015, Mexico's longest-running TV show.

The Mexican president wrote in his Twitter account that his own eldest son, José Ramón, "woke up early to see him (on television) more than 40 years ago."

López, who was no relation to the president, usually performed dressed in kid's clothing well into his 80s. He helped found a genre of adult comics dressed as kids that became a staple for decades on Mexican television.

His longevity — he performed in a child's raspy squeak throughout his career — led to joking speculation he would outlive everyone else in show business.

López's agent, Jessica Nevilley, said he died Saturday morning. A private funeral will be held for him later Saturday.



Xavier "Chabelo" Lopez smiles during an event in Mexico City, Thursday, Aug. 7, 2014. Lopez, a Mexican children's comic better known by his stage name "Chabelo," died at the age of 88, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador wrote Saturday, March 25, 2023.

(Saul Lopez/Cuartoscuro via AP)

A U.S. citizen — he was born in Chicago to Mexican parents — López returned to Mexico with his family at a young age and trained as a doctor. But he found his calling in acting.

The comic's family wrote on his fan page that López "died suddenly of abdominal complications."

He was survived by several children and his wife. □

Kane extends England goals record in 2-0 win against Ukraine

(AP) — Presented with a golden boot before kickoff, Harry Kane's golden touch continued for England on Sunday as he struck a record-extending 55th goal for his country.

The Tottenham striker had already surpassed Wayne Rooney as the Three Lions' outright leading scorer with his penalty in Thursday's 2-1 win against Italy in Naples. Back at Wembley, he got the chance to celebrate in front of his home fans with another goal in England's 2-0 win against Ukraine in European Championship qualifying.

The England captain struck in the 37th minute, converting Bukayo Saka's cross at the far post.

Saka deservedly got on the scoresheet himself three minutes later when turning on the edge of the area and curling a shot into the top corner.

With that double strike England effectively secured the victory and ensured a 100% start to qualifying for Euro 2024 in what has been an impressive response to the disappointment of being eliminated from last year's World Cup at the quarterfinal stage. □



Englands' Harry Kane, left, makes an attempt to score past Ukraine's goalkeeper Anatoliy Trubin during the Euro 2024 group C qualifying soccer match between England and Ukraine at Wembley Stadium in London, Sunday, March 26, 2023.

(AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

Laporte and Van Aert secure 1-2 at Gent-Wevelgem

(AP) — Christophe Laporte won the first one-day classic race of his career after the Frenchman and teammate Wout van Aert secured a 1-2 finish at Gent-Wevelgem for the Jumbo-Visma team on Sunday.

In heavy rain, the duo resisted the peloton's chase in the 260.9-kilometer (162-mile) race through Belgium after a 50-kilometer break-away they launched on a steep ascent.

Van Aert and Laporte celebrated together on their way to the finish line, with the 2021 winner happy to let Laporte take the win by a few centimeters.

"He is such a great team player that it was an easy decision for me," Van Aert said.

"He is not only a colleague, but also a very good friend. I have not forgotten all that he has done for me in the past."

Sep Vanmarcke, who rides for Israel-Premier Tech, won the sprint for third place, about two minutes behind. Laporte became the fourth French rider to win the cobbled classic after Jacques Anquetil, Bernard Hinault and Philippe Gaumont.

Marlen Reusser of Switzerland won the women's race ahead of Megan Jastrab of the United States and Dutch rider Maike van der Duin. □



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Culinary Voyage

Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy Calamari or the mouthwatering creamy Garlic Tarragon Shrimp.

You can also opt for a classic French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one of the most exclusive wine from the

great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

Creating memories

If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

Live entertainment

Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Whether you join us for breakfast, lunch or dinner, Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar offers a relaxed and inspirational dining experience overlooking the beautiful Eagle Beach with spectacular ocean views. Gather with friends and family for drinks and appetizers or a night of pampering and relaxation.



Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all throughout the year, and hopefully will continue to do so in the years to come. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, every to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon! ☐



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Water's Edge is open daily from 8am – 11pm

To reserve your table please call **+297 583-8000 / ext 8106** or direct line **+297 586-9494**

For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website **watersedge-aruba.com**

